



State Personnel NEWS

A news quarterly for and about Georgia State Employees



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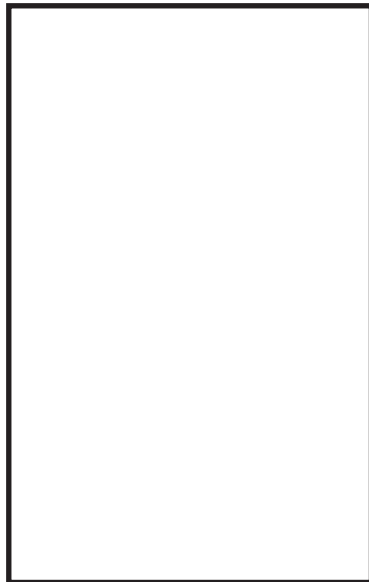
Ebersole To Head State Merit System

Gov. Zell Miller has appointed longtime aide Dan Ebersole as the new Commissioner of the State Merit System.

"In a variety of assignments over the years, Dan Ebersole has done an outstanding job for me and the people of Georgia," Gov. Miller said. "His administrative and leadership skills will both benefit and enhance the State Merit System."

Ebersole will begin his new duties in April after the 1997 legislative session. Strategic Development Director Dana Russell was appointed interim commissioner.

Ebersole, 44, has worked with the Governor for more than 18 years. He is currently Senior Executive Assistant to the Governor, having a hand in the development of programs affecting education, economic development, law enforcement, health care and the environment. He is a member of the board of the Georgia Center for



Dan Ebersole

Advanced Telecommunications Technology.

Gov. Miller named Ebersole as Deputy Director of the Office of Planning and Budget in 1990, and

he served in that capacity for the first two years of the Miller Administration, working with the Governor to set budget priorities and policies. He was director of the Georgia Senate Research Office from 1980 until becoming deputy director of OPB. In addition to managing a staff of research analysts, he served as the Senate's in-house budget expert.

He completed a B.A. degree in political science at Temple University and an M.S. at Georgia State University. He and his wife, Sarah, have two children.

Gov. Miller also appointed three new members to the State Personnel Board: Robert Wagner, an Atlanta certified public accountant, Claybon Edwards, a funeral director with Edwards Funeral Home in Fort Valley, and Anne Kaiser of Atlanta, Southeast Director of Marketing and Sales for KPMG Peat Marwick LLP.

Five State Agencies Plan Shift To New Discipline System

A new approach to employee discipline designed to maximize employees' sense of responsibility and commitment to the organization will be implemented in at least five state agencies this spring and summer.

The State Merit System, the Office of the Secretary of State and the State Board of Pardons and Paroles already have begun the implementation process for the *Discipline Without Punishment* system developed by management consultant Dick Grote. The Department of Administrative Services and the Georgia Forestry Commission will begin their implementation process after the legislative session ends.

A human resources and performance management systems specialist, Grote developed his *Discipline Without Punishment* approach while employed at Frito-Lay. He formed Dallas-based Grote Consulting in 1977 to promote the concept, which has been implemented in both public and private sector businesses. Grote also is an adjunct professor of management at the University of Dallas Graduate School of Management.

"With the new environment in government, agencies are searching for ways to enhance the performance management practices they have in place. They want a single employee discipline system that addresses both classified and unclassified employees," said Diane Schlachter, Ed.D., director of the State Merit System's Training (See *Discipline*, page 2.)

AmeriCare Sets April Launch For Child Development Center

All systems are go to launch the new Capitol Hill Child Development Center in early to mid-April. Located in the Pete Hackney Parking Facility, the center will have space for 144 children.

As anticipated, the Georgia Building Authority (GBA) has signed a contract with AmeriCare Early Learning Centers to manage the center.

"They are in the process of making some modifications to the building, setting up the playground,

and installing furniture and equipment," said GBA Assistant Director for Planning R. Bruce MacGregor.

"Given the anticipated excellence of the provider, we anticipate a very minimal role for GBA beyond maintaining the building. They've got an energetic and well-qualified director, and we believe the center is going to be a success."

Director Katherine Garrison has (See *April Launch*, page 4)

Chattahoochee Tech Wins National Automotive Award—Chattahoochee Technical Institute's Automotive Technology Department in Marietta has been named the 1996 first place winner by the American Vocational Association (AVA)/American Automobile Manufacturers Association Industry Planning Council for excellence in automotive service programs. It was the first time a Georgia school has won the award. The school received a \$10,000 cash award to be used for scholarships in the Automotive Technology Department, as well as new vehicles to be donated by major automobile manufacturers to be used for study. AVA Executive Director Brett Lovejoy commended the Chattahoochee staff "for having achieved such high standards of program quality." Shown (L-R) are Mark Jones, instructor; John Mack, General Motors and Industry Co-Chair; Dr. Harlon Crimm, President, Chattahoochee Tech; Ervin Lott, Automotive Department Chair; and Mike Pounders, instructor.

Parents are invited to tour the Capitol Hill Child Development Center during an open house scheduled Tuesday, March 18, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Discipline Without Punishment (from Page 1)

ing and Organization Development Division, who serves as project coordinator for *Discipline Without Punishment* implementation.

"We know we want to move the workforce to commitment, and Grote's focus is on commitment, not compliance. The Georgia Performance Management Process (PMP) and *Discipline Without Punishment* both have as part of their philosophical underpinning a desire for responsible action on the part of the manager and on the part of the employee. The goal for both is to foster commitment to the organization," Schlachter said.

"That was the appeal for agencies, that they see it as an extension of PMP. What PMP didn't address in detail is dealing with the chronic poor performer. It focused on an overall approach. *Discipline Without Punishment* focuses on what you do when the day-to-day PMP doesn't work. We have to integrate this special discipline system with our current pay-for-performance management system. We will learn through the implementation teams and through the agencies' trainers how we need to link them up.

"For example, the Georgia PMP talks about coaching as part of the PMP cycle. In *Discipline Without Punishment*, coaching also has a special role. What are the similarities and differences in these kinds of coaching? Both are part of a continuum to build superior performance."

The supervisor first follows spe-

cific steps to determine if training or job reengineering is needed to eliminate lapses in performance. If a problem continues, the supervisor uses an intensive coaching process to close the gap between actual and desired performance. The supervisor moves into formal disciplinary action only if there is no positive change in the employee.

The disciplinary phase is built on three levels: an oral reminder, a written reminder, and decision-making leave, a one-day disciplinary suspension with pay. On that day, the employee must decide to solve the immediate problem and also commit to fully acceptable performance in every area of the job—or quit. Once he makes this commitment, any employee who fails to keep his commitment is terminated.

Among Grote's reasons for paying the employee for the one-day disciplinary suspension are that it changes the supervisor's role from adversary to coach, eliminates money as an issue, and reduces anger and hostility.

Each participating agency has set up its own implementation team headed by a project coordinator. These teams will meet with Grote on a regular basis as they adapt the system to meet their agency's needs—each agency customizes policies and procedures within the basic framework to fit its culture.

"It's a consensus-driven approach," Schlachter said. "Consensus-building starts with the implementation team. Organizations selected people for the teams with at least one goal in mind,

to have a good representation of the organization as a whole."

Grote also requires participating agencies to train managers and supervisors on the management skills and approaches needed, as well as their agency's unique policies and procedures.

Any issues that come up in training will be addressed by the implementation team prior to executive review and adoption of formal policies and procedures. Formal employee communication sessions then will be held to introduce the new discipline system.

Grote's system has been designed to streamline the discipline process by training managers to use their agency's policies and procedures matrix as a guidebook for handling situations as they arise.

"They understand the agency's overall policies and procedures, they understand their responsibilities—working within a well-defined framework lets them maximize the effectiveness of the time they spend on discipline issues," Schlachter explained.

The Merit System serves as the link between the agency project coordinators and Grote as agencies go through the process of building their unique framework, Schlachter explained.

"Part of our role is in orchestrating the resolution of any issues that come up for the implementation teams, whether it's to get a response from the Attorney General's Office, or provide tools and information for the teams," she said.

"We coordinate all the logistics for the team meetings with Grote and will coordinate training for those agencies which have contracted with us."

She noted that the Attorney General's Office has "responded very favorably" to the new discipline system. The Merit System also will work with the State Personnel Board to approve a rule modification to authorize decision-making leave.

Executive briefings were held last summer for Grote to introduce the *Discipline Without Punishment* model, and another round of showcase sessions may be held this summer, Schlachter said.

"A number of agencies are looking at when, as opposed to if, they will implement and we anticipate offering a Phase III in late summer or early fall," she said. For information, contact Schlachter at the State Merit System Training and Organization Development Division, 404/371-7371.

Quality Service Georgia Training Program Available

The Quality Service Georgia Training Program now offers a series of courses designed to provide a foundation for an agency implementing a quality initiative.

With guidance from State Quality Coordinator Barbara Jones, the QSG Curriculum Advisory Group and the State Merit System Training and Organization Development Division collaborated on the course design. Members of the advisory group included Paula McIntosh and Sharon Dougherty, Department of Human Resources, Dave Otto, Department of Corrections, Frank Heiney, Public Safety Department, and George Smith and Jean Specht, Department of Defense.

Course development was outsourced to two Atlanta-area training groups which specialize in training programs on quality, Quality Team Associates and Executive Counselors.

"Three courses have been developed for the state and are licensed to us for use in state government. A fourth course, *Consulting Skills for the Quality Leader*, is now being developed," said Diane Schlachter, Ed.D., Training Division Director. "The purpose of the training is to help an agency implement a plan of action, to use its training as an organizational development strategy."

From Barbara Jones' perspective as State Quality Coordinator, "It is critical that government agencies learn to operate in a very different way than they did in the past. We must use a new operating methodology, often called strategic management, in leading agencies of the future. In addition to strategic planning, this methodology must include a systems view, customer focus, process management, and employee involvement. Quality Service Georgia is pleased to have partnered with the Merit System's T & OD Division to develop a training series that teaches how to lead in this new way."

Many agencies collaborated closely during the past year to design the content and delivery methodology so it would be tailored to government, she noted. "In other words, this series was designed by you, the agencies, for you, the agencies," she said. "Don't miss an opportunity to take advantage of these top-notch courses."

The courses include:

Introduction to Quality: This four-hour course provides an understanding of principles of quality and the implications for Georgia state government. Participants gain insights about how their organization is approaching and carrying out a quality initiative. The course is targeted to all employees.

Effective Team Leadership: This three-day course is essential for team leaders of process improvement teams or those providing leadership to process teams. Quality advisors also benefit. Participants learn what makes a team, understand the group process, and develop group facilitation skills. They also learn how to lead the team through the start-up processes. The first course (or equivalent training/experience) is a prerequisite.

Government Process Improvement Simulation: Participants learn the value of process management and gain experience using the QUALITY Process Improvement Model. Quality advisors, team leaders and members of process improvement teams are ideal participants for the three-day course. The first two courses are prerequisites, but equivalent training or experience is an acceptable substitute.

Consulting Skills for the Quality Leader: This two-day course will explore the leadership role of the Quality Advisor in areas such as helping the team leader start a new team, implementing change and serving as a consultant. The first three courses (or equivalent training/experience) will be prerequisites.

Several delivery options are available and organizations may use one or a combination of these alternatives:

—An agency or department may use internal staff to deliver the training. Each course in the program has a companion Train-the-Trainer Course to prepare agency personnel to deliver the training.

—The State Merit System Training Division can deliver the training for employees.

—The course developer can deliver the training for employees.

For information about the QSG Training Program, contact the SMS Training Division at 404/371-7371.

STATE PERSONNEL NEWS

Volume 21, Number 1

State Personnel Board

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The *State Personnel News* is published quarterly for state employees by the Commissioner's Office of the State Merit System. If you have comments or questions, wish to submit material for publication, or need to correct a distribution problem/address, contact Martha Evans, Editor, *State Personnel News*, 200 Piedmont Avenue, SE, Suite 504 West Tower, Atlanta, GA 30334, or call 404/656-2723. If you have a disability and need this material in an alternative format, notify the Editor at the above listed address, or for TDD Relay Service only: 1-800-255-0056 (text telephone) or 1-800-255-0135 (voice).

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Call Editor Martha Evans (404/656-2723) for information on how to submit articles or photos for publication in *The State Personnel News*.

Recruitment & Selection, Conflict Resolution Top List For 1997 Spring Personnel Conference

Recruitment & Selection and Conflict Resolution are the two primary topics for the Council for State Personnel Administration Spring Conference scheduled April 22-24 in Columbus.

The conference is sponsored by the Council for State Personnel Administration, the Georgia Certified Public Manager Program of the State Merit System, and the University of Georgia.

The Recruitment & Selection session, to be held Tuesday, April 22, is one of the nine core courses of the Comprehensive Human Resource Program (CHRP), which was designed to address information and education in the major functional areas of personnel administration. The session leaders, all experts in recruitment and selection with the State Merit System, will provide an overview of professional recruitment and selec-

tion principles and the systems currently used in state government, including contemporary issues, challenges, and applied practices. Specific topics include: Recruitment Sources, Options & Procedures (including the Internet); Minimum Qualifications, Preferred Qualifications, Application Review and Qualification Interpretation; and Legal Update, Including Impact of Act 816. Breakout sessions will be held on developing screening criteria, conducting behavioral interviews, and applying the ADA in the selection process.

The Conflict Resolution session, scheduled Wednesday, April 23, will cover designing systems for managing conflict, recognizing that each organization has its own character and culture. It is intended to help agencies assess their organization's particular climate to evaluate how current conflict man-

agement approaches are working, as well as to identify what additional resources are needed. A cafeteria plan of conflict management methods will be presented to assist in designing a customized conflict management system that meets the organization's unique needs. Participants will also study implementation models.

Presenters will include: Janet Rechtman, president, Rechtman Consulting, Atlanta; Raytheon Rawls, president, Settlement Institute, Atlanta; and Darnetta Simlton, Program Manager, State Merit System.

The final session on Thursday, April 24, will include FLSA/Legislative/GeorgiaGain updates and a presentation from Doug Smart of Smart Seminars in Roswell on "Making This Your Best Year Yet."

Fees are \$60 for a single day or \$115 for the full conference. Registration deadline is April 1. Registration forms should be returned to State Personnel Administration Conference, Attn. Judy J. Wilson, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, The University of Georgia, Lucy Cobb Complex, 201 N. Milledge Avenue, Athens, GA 30602-5482.

Conflict Resolution Begins With Conflict Awareness

By Janet Rechtman, Rechtman Consulting Group

When you say *snow*, many different words might come to mind, some positive, some negative. When you say *conflict*, most often the words that come to mind are all negative. No wonder managers perceive conflict to be a significant problem at work.

If properly managed, conflict can actually be a significant opportunity in the work place. It can be a wake-up call that something is wrong. It can be a signpost for a new solution to an old problem. It can be an opportunity for learning and reconciliation.

Exploring the positive side of conflict begins with being aware of the different types of conflict you may encounter at work. To prepare for the Spring Personnel Conference session on Conflict Management, make March your private conflict awareness month. Between now and the conference, use this model to identify examples of different types of conflict.

Conflict Awareness Model

When people have conflicts, they are generally responding with antagonistic behavior to perceived or real differences in interests. In fact, conflict management is the act of resolving differences in interests, thus removing the reason(s) for the antagonistic behavior. With this in mind, over the coming weeks, try to identify examples of the following types of conflict:

Open Conflict: When people have different interests which they demonstrate with antagonistic behaviors.

Latent Conflict: When people have different interests, but do not respond with antagonistic behavior.

False Conflict: When people have common interests, but antagonistic behavior.

No Conflict: When people have common interests and compatible behavior.

Bring your examples to the workshop in Columbus, so that you can apply your organization's "culture of conflict" to the discussion.

Gov. Miller Announces Plan To Enhance Adoption Opportunities For Foster Children

Governor Zell Miller has recommended several new steps in his fiscal year 1998 budget to improve the lives and adoption opportunities for Georgia's foster children.

In addition, a new, separate Office of Adoptions will be created within the Department of Human Resources. The Office of Adoptions will be responsible for all state adoption policies. The office will focus on getting more children adopted faster by streamlining the adoption process, including privatizing adoption services.

Forrest Burson, director of the Douglas County Division of Family and Children Services, will serve as director of the new office.

The \$7.7 million in new budget initiatives includes:

- An increase in the adoption supplement per diem (\$2.6 million to be matched with federal funds for a total of \$3.8 million).

Currently, a foster parent is paid \$10.50 per day for taking care of one of the state's foster children, while adoptive parents are paid only \$7.88 per day. This recommendation would make both foster care and adoption rates the same, thereby removing the disincentive for the foster parent who need additional financial support to adopt special needs children. It is estimated that this change will increase the number of adoptions by at least 10 percent.

- Using private agencies to speed up placement of foster children in loving, permanent homes (\$1.2 million). Currently, it takes anywhere from 18 to 25 months to place a child in an adoptive home. Contracting with private agencies will reduce the caseload of state workers, allowing both parties to place more children in more homes faster.
- A new independent living services program to help foster

children adapt to everyday life once they leave foster care (\$1.5 million). This program teaches foster children age 16 and above the skills they need to manage on their own.

The Independent Living program will target foster children who are leaving the foster care system and entering college. While funds for tuition and fees can be obtained from various sources, these sources do not cover room and board. Funds are recommended to pay room and board at an average of \$2,500 per student per year for 500 students and for tutoring services at \$60 per week for 100 students.

- A new computerized tracking system for children in foster care, adoptive, and child protective services (\$2.4 million).

There are currently 16,733 children in Georgia in the custody of the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS). Of these, 1,019 are available for adoption.

April Launch For Child Development Center (from Page 1)

10 years of childcare experience, including five years as a center director. Assistant Director LaVerne R. Daniels also has 10 years of experience.

"We will have 22 total staff members, which will fulfill National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC) requirements for low teacher/child ratios, and all will be experienced," Garrison said. "We project having at least one degreed teacher—either a child development associate or four-year degree—in each classroom."

Applicants must pass an aptitude test and a drug test. References are checked, and a police background check is done. Garrison and another AmeriCare center director interview the screened applicants singly or in groups and reach consensus on the best candidates.

AmeriCare plans to bring the staff in prior to the center opening to conduct mandatory classes in child abuse, disease control, CPR and first-aid.

"Normally, a center has one year to complete training, but we want to get all training done before we open so that we will be at 100% on CPR and first-aid," Garrison said.

Her goal is to get a head start on the tough accreditation process required to gain NAEYC certification. A center has to be open for at least a year before it begins the accreditation process.

"It does make for quality care because it requires one-and-a-half years of self study," Garrison said. "You have to modify classrooms, ratios, the way you do things—make changes for the good of the children and the good of the parents. We will have parent surveys and a parent advisory committee to insure communication and to provide support for parent/child functions."

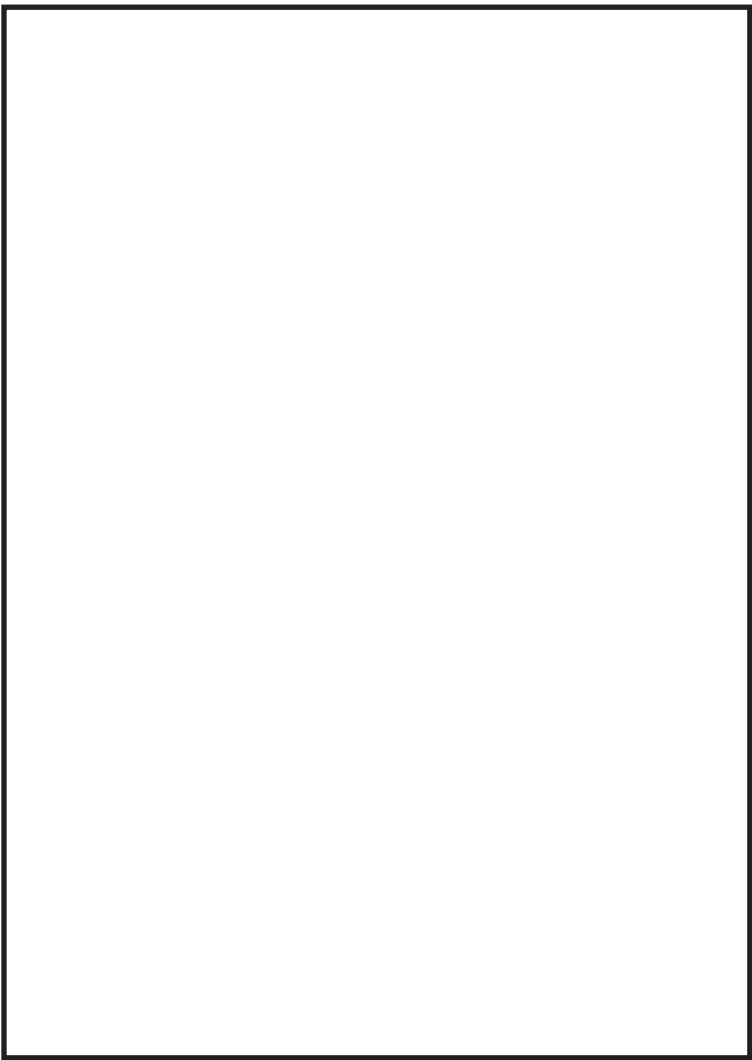
At the end of the self-study period, NAEYC sends out a validator to observe and inspect and make the determination whether the center can be accredited.

The staff will include a full-time cook, who will prepare breakfast, lunch and two nutritious snacks on site.

"We will have family-style dining. The care givers will sit down with the children and help them serve themselves. This helps to promote self-esteem and foster independence," Garrison said.

Garrison also sees the playground as an extension of the classroom.

"For example, they may go outside and paint," she said. "The fact that it's not a large play area will not affect the quality. We will have both



Center Director Katherine Garrison demonstrates the safety feature built into diaper-changing tables, a recessed area to hold infants securely.

teacher-directed and child-directed activities and the play areas will be differentiated by age with age-appropriate equipment."

She emphasized that security will be a top priority at the center. Parents will have to sign their children in and out at a security door. Cameras will monitor activity both inside the center and on the playground.

"Every area will be fenced," Garrison said. "There will be no access from the parking deck to the playground and some existing fences will be raised before we open."

Weekly rates for the center will be: infants, \$115; toddlers, \$110; two-year-olds, \$100; three- and four-year-olds, \$95; after-school

users, \$55. Tuition includes one full meal and two snacks. Breakfast costs an additional dollar.

A tuition discount will be allowed for parents with multiple children enrolled in the Center on a full-time basis. A 15% discount will be applied for the second (oldest) and additional children enrolled on a full-time basis.

Parents are welcome to visit the center, which is now open Monday-Friday from 7 a.m.-4 p.m., or to call 404/525-7878 for information and/or an appointment. The center is located on the ground level of the Pete Hackney Parking Facility at 197 Decatur St. SE. (Enter at the driveway located at the intersection of Decatur Street and Pratt Street.)

Fiscal Management Council Offers Two \$500 Scholarships

The Fiscal Management Council again is offering two \$500 scholarship awards in 1997 for college and university students who are pursuing a course of study in a field related to governmental fiscal management, including public administration, finance, or accounting.

To be eligible to apply for a scholarship, a student must be a rising senior or a graduate student (full or part-time).

The application deadline is March 31. Application forms are available from Marilyn Harris, 770/986-1641.

Training Schedule: State Financial Management Certificate Program Courses

For registration information on any of the State Financial Management Certificate Program courses listed below, contact Janet Andrews or Teresa English, Room 188, Georgia Center for Continuing Education, The University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602, 706/542-1328. (Class hours are 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. daily.)

Schedule By Location/Dates Offered

Introductory Governmental Accounting Part I	
Decatur	May 6-9
Introductory Governmental Accounting Part II	
Atlanta	March 18-21
Augusta	April 8-11
Decatur	May 27-30
Lawrenceville (Gwinnett)	April 21-24
Intermediate Governmental Accounting Part I	
Augusta	May 13-15
Decatur	April 1-3
Lawrenceville (Gwinnett)	May 20-22
Tifton	March 11-13
Intermediate Governmental Accounting Part II	
Augusta	June 9-11
Exam:	June 26
Decatur	April 29-30, May 1
Exam:	May 29
Lawrenceville (Gwinnett)	June 17-19
Exam:	June 30
Tifton	April 8-10
Exam:	May 8

Atlanta, Savannah Schools Added To Statewide System

The locally governed Atlanta and Savannah Technical Institutes will join the statewide system effective July 1, Gov. Zell Miller has announced.

Their addition brings to 32 the number of technical institutes managed by the state Department of Technical and Adult Education, and leaves Gwinnett Technical Institute as the only public technical school in Georgia not operated by the state.

Gov. Miller has recommended including \$1.7 million in the 1998 fiscal state budget to fund the first year of a two-year phase-in to bring both schools under state management. The state already contributes \$8.1 million and \$4.7 million respectively to the Atlanta and Savan-

nah Technical Institutes, in addition to providing both schools with lottery funds to replace obsolete equipment.

Atlanta Tech employs 177 faculty and staff and had a 1996 fall quarter enrollment of 1,485 students. Savannah Tech has 129 faculty and staff and a 1996 fall quarter enrollment of 1,796.

"In the next century, only one in three workers will need a college education," Gov. Miller said.

"The backbone of our economy will be workers trained in our technical schools to be creative, flexible, independent thinkers who can adapt to changing work environments and handle increasingly complex technologies."

Magic Kingdom Membership Offered For State Employees

The State Council for Personnel Administration is now offering free membership to Walt Disney’s Magic Kingdom Club to give employees free and exclusive benefits, values and advantages not available to the general public.

Membership cards are issued to employees upon request. Membership in the club is extended to the cardholder’s family (spouse, children, parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters). The person whose name appears on the membership card need not be present for a family member to use the card.

The membership application form (or the required information contained in a memorandum) must be submitted to the appropriate person listed below, along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope (\$1.01 postage on a #10 business envelope). Cards will not be issued without a SASE.

Employees of any state agency (other than DHR) who do not see their department contact listed below should send their requests to: Karen Davis-Thompson, State Merit System, 200 Piedmont Avenue, Room 504, West Tower, Atlanta, GA 30334.

Contacts:

- Suzanne Teal
Administrative Services
200 Piedmont Avenue
Suite 1504, West Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334
- Linda Coody
Agriculture
Agriculture Building
Room 300
Atlanta, GA 30334
- Jan O’Hara
Defense
P. O. Box 17965
Atlanta, GA 30316

- Cynthia Moses
Education
(no local school systems)
205 Butler Street
Suite 2052, East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334
- Wanda Myers
GA Student Finance Commission
2082 E. Exchange Place, #200
Tucker, GA 30084
- Lisa Ogle
Industry, Trade & Tourism
285 Peachtree Center Ave., #1000
Atlanta, GA 30303

- Sonya Flanigan
Insurance Commissioner
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive
Suite 916, West Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334
- Teresa Daniels
Medical Assistance

Magic Kingdom Club Card Request

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Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (\$1.01 postage on a #10 size business envelope) with this request to receive your club card, membership guide and price list. The membership application must contain this information:

Name _____
Home Address _____
City/State/ZIP _____
Department _____
Business Address _____
City/State/ZIP _____
Business Telephone _____

#2 Peachtree Street
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Atlanta, GA 30303

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Linda Jolly
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Secretary of State
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive
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Peggy Wages
State Merit System
200 Piedmont Avenue
Room 502, West Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334

Linda Hulsey
Technical/Adult Education
1800 Century Place
Atlanta, GA 30345-4304

Human Resources
Employees of the Department of Human Resources who do not see their office listed below should send their requests to: Cathy Pye, Personnel, DHR, 47 Trinity Avenue, Room 214-H, Atlanta, GA 30334. Employees of DHR/MH/MR Hospitals should contact their personnel offices. If cards are not available, requests should be sent to the address above.

Debra Massey
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456 Oglethorpe Street
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Virginia Ross
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P. O. Box 1259
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Melanie Martin
South Georgia CSB
PO Box 3318
Valdosta, GA 31604

STATE EMPLOYEES CREDIT UNION

130 Memorial Drive · Atlanta, Georgia 30303

For information, call: 404/656-3748 Toll Free: 1/800/659-7328

State Employees Days

Sunday, May 25, through Friday, June 13

(Saturday, May 31, and Saturday, June 7, not included)

Once again, the State Employees Credit Union has negotiated a fantastic deal for state employees at Six Flags Over Georgia. The dates: **Sunday, May 25, through Friday, June 13 (except for Saturdays, May 31, and June 7). That's a choice of 18 days to use this fantastic discount.** State employees and their families are all invited to participate in this tremendous benefit to state employees. Don’t miss this opportunity to save money, and enjoy Six Flags early in the season. The regular admission price is \$32 at the gate this year. Your price for this special event is \$17. This amounts to a \$15 per ticket savings (almost 50%).

Six Flags has announced the biggest concert of the year will be the inimitable Winona Judd on Friday, June 6, at 8 p.m. State employees and their guests will be able to purchase discount tickets through this program, which makes you eligible to buy the concert ticket (usually around \$3 extra). That extra charge has not yet been settled, but will be announced in the April issue of *The State Personnel News*.

The newest roller coaster—*Batman, The Ride*—will open in late April or early May, so it will be up and running before and during the special State Employee Days. *Batman, The Ride* is a unique new concept in which the coaster is suspended from a monorail-type track. Another relatively new roller coaster, *Viper* is just coiled and ready to "strike twice." All the favorites will still be on hand to thrill you—*Ninja, The Looping Starship, Ragin’ Rivers, Thunder River, Splashwater Falls, Free Fall, The Great-American Scream Machine, The Mind-Bender, The Dahlenega Mine Train*, a local favorite, *The Georgia Cyclone*, and more. *The Hanson Cars* ride is back by popular demand. Closed to make room for *The Georgia Cyclone* just inside the front entrance, this ride has been moved to another location and reopened after many families missed the fun of the antique cars and self-drive track.

Tickets will be on sale beginning in April at all the State Employees Credit Union offices or you may order by mail. Mail orders should allow at least seven calendar days for processing and return mailing.

TICKET ORDER FORM

State Employees Credit Union

State Employees Days at Six Flags

Sunday, May 25, through Friday, June 13

(Saturdays, May 31 and June 7, not included)

Send me _____ tickets at \$17 each. Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Name: _____ SSN: ____ - ____ - ____

Address: _____

City: _____ ST: ____ ZIP: _____

Home Telephone: _____

Office Telephone: _____

Please allow at least seven calendar days for processing and mailing.

Send order with check or money order and Stamped Envelope to:
State Employees Credit Union, 130 Memorial Dr., SW, Atlanta, GA 30303.
404/656-3748 Toll Free: 1/800/659-7328

Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program Revitalizes Georgia Traditions

Georgia traditions are being revitalized by the Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program recently initiated by the Georgia Council for the Arts. These apprenticeships will focus on master artists whose work is rooted in folk traditions, such as old-time country swing guitar, red-clay utilitarian pottery, hand-carved walking sticks, and pieced quilts. Supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, the program brings each master artist together with a committed apprentice for intensive instruction in a traditional craft or performing art. The grant pays for master artists' teaching time, supplies, and apprentices' travel.

During the initial year of the program, GCA is funding four apprenticeships: Arthur Pete Dilbert, walking cane carver from Savannah, is working with apprentice Willis Jones, Jr. of Savannah; Clifford "Chunk" Dingler, old-time country and western swing guitarist from Newnan, is working with apprentice Jerry Moore of Newnan; Bobby Ferguson, North Georgia potter from Gillsville, is working with apprentice Patrick Shields of Danielsville; and Evelyn Poore, quilt maker from Monticello, is working with apprentice Christina Beveridge of Hillsboro.

"Apprenticeships are a time-honored system by which skills, values, and artistry are learned under the guidance of a recognized master," GCA Folklife Program Director Maggie Holtzberg said. "These apprenticeships are intended to ensure the continuity of Georgia's folklife and traditional folk arts. The fact that they provide hands-on, intensive one-on-one training means there's a much better chance to carry forward and preserve traditions."

Applications for future apprenticeships will be available in late spring. The program is structured for the master artist and the apprentice to submit a joint application. For more information, contact Holtzberg at 404/651-7934.

Arthur P. Dilbert

Arthur P. Dilbert is a walking stick carver and retired international longshoreman from the Coffee Bluff section of south Savannah whose artistry and occupation are intertwined. Born in 1928 in Pinpoint, GA, Dilbert grew up around the river culture of oyster and crab fishing and shucking common to that area. His father was a "riverman" with his own boat and homemade nets. Dilbert learned how to carve knitting needles made



Arthur P. Dilbert, photo by Susan Levitas for Georgia Folklife Program

of bamboo used in net making, a skill he used until factory-made nets supplanted hand-woven ones. His knitting needles were well respected among rivermen and his walking sticks became legendary with his fellow longshoremen. Over time, Dilbert mastered carving figurines onto sticks that tell stories about being a longshoreman and his own life experiences in Savannah. His signature carved figure is the alligator, an animal he sees as emblematic of longshoremen's work.

These days Dilbert spends a great deal of time carving sticks, sometimes staying up all night to complete an idea. His sticks feature animals, people, symbols, and shapes carved with exquisite detail. He wants to teach this detail to an apprentice both because he would like to see the work continue and, in the tradition of competitive longshoremen, because he feels the competition will spur him on to greater carvings. His work is beginning to gain recognition among

collectors. His apprentice, Willis Jones, Jr., born in Savannah in 1953, is a woodcarver and collector of African-American folk art and memorabilia.

Clifford E. "Chunk" Dingler

Clifford E. "Chunk" Dingler, master machinist and guitar player, is a living link to an era during which itinerant factory workers brought western swing music into the cotton mill towns surrounding Atlanta. Born in 1926 in Arnco, GA, Dingler grew up working in the mill and playing the guitar. Coming of age during the heyday of "hillbilly" radio broadcasts, Dingler started out playing the north Georgia old-time fiddle music made popular by stars such as Gid Tanner. At age seven, he won first place playing guitar in an amateur contest and by the time he was a young adult, he was making money playing for square dances and house parties. At the same time, western swing music, brought to Arnco by Texas musicians who

rode the rails into town to work in the mill, captured the imagination of Dingler and his friends. Dingler learned to play an up-tempo improvisational style of lead guitar from these musicians, who later went on to play with the nationally popular Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys.

Dingler honed his skills as a swing guitarist at informal jam sessions, practicing the basics and then experimenting with improvisation. As an accomplished player, Dingler became known for his fluid, "notey" style. He has consistently won guitar competitions and performed at festivals throughout the state and region. On most Saturday mornings, Dingler can be found jamming with local musicians at Newnan Music, a store located in a strip mall downtown. This 1990s version of the country store or kitchen jam has extended traditional music into the modern landscape and Chunk Dingler is propelling it into the next generation. Indebted to the musicians who showed him the tricks of the trade, Dingler is committed to passing on his skills. He will work with apprentice Jerry Moore, also of Newnan, who, in Dingler's words, is "a very dedicated person in his music. In my opinion, he is the best prospect for keeping old-time music and western swing alive."

Evelyn Poore

Evelyn Poore has quilting in her blood. As a little girl in Cripple Creek, Alabama, Poore learned to piece and quilt from her mother. Though their quilts were made for warmth, using materials at hand—batting from field cotton and scraps from feed sacks—Evelyn's mother put a lot of fancy work into her quilts. One of the things passed from mother to daughter besides traditional patterns was a penchant for being meticulous: "When Momma was teaching me, if you didn't do it right, you pulled it out. She didn't let it go just because you were learning."

Today, Poore spends many hours working in a studio built by her son. Work tables are well lit and nearby shelves hold bolts of neatly stacked cotton fabric. In 1996, Poore's dogwood quilt was one of the 400 handmade quilts donated to participating countries in the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games. The quilt was made from two-inch squares "all hand quilted in the ditch (seam), with each square representing small town squares of Georgia." Though she currently belongs to three quilt guilds, Poore can re-

member years when nobody quilted. Poore has been a dedicated teacher, actively sharing her skills with those less accomplished. Having feared quilting was going to die out, she is enthusiastic about passing on what she knows to apprentice Christina Beveridge. This information will include how to get patterns, choose fabric, do appliqué, and do piecing and make her points come out. Beveridge, a student at Jasper County High School, is already a skilled seamstress and has begun a patchwork quilt.

Bobby Ferguson

Bobby Ferguson's heritage is founded in pottery. His grandfather, Charles P. Ferguson, and his grandmother, Catherine Howell, were both at least third-generation members of well-established pottery families in North Georgia. A fifth-generation potter, Ferguson began making pottery as a child in his father's shop in Gillsville, GA. In addition to making their own ware, the family began a trucking business, hauling pottery for neighboring pottery families including the Hewells and the Cravens. To supplement the loss of demand for traditional pieces formerly made by his father and grandfather, Ferguson chose to make white yardware (strawberry jars, planters). He now supplies gardenware and traditional wares to many wholesale and retail outlets up and down the East coast.

With the recent resurgence of interest surrounding traditional potters, Ferguson has begun making more traditional pieces again, such as urns, churns, and his famous "Rebecca" pitchers, which are turned from his own clay and glaze mixes. His grape and acorn pitchers and vases, with the gracefully twisted handles, show off Ferguson's skills as a potter. He operates a pottery shop with his wife, Mary, his nephew, Harold, and the extended family. Several family members, including his two sons, are now making pottery in the tradition of their ancestors.

Folklorist and pottery scholar John Burrison has said, "Bobby is a good potter with a solid traditional background. This apprenticeship could give Bobby the encouragement to continue actively producing pottery. Ferguson will work with apprentice Patrick Shields, who lives outside Athens. Shields was introduced to folk pottery by his mother, who taught course work in pottery and took him on frequent trips to visit North Georgia potters.

New Approach to Workers' Compensation

Injured Employees Get Back To Work Sooner

By Michael Clark

A new approach to workers' compensation begins with two ideas that may be just the opposite of what many people—including employees and personnel administrators—now think.

First, it sees an injured employee as a valuable resource rather than an unproductive liability. Second, it sees work as a way to help an employee recover from physical injuries.

"We should return employees to work to get them well," says Diane Stephens, workers' compensation program administrator with the Department of Administrative Services, who is overseeing implementation of the Return-to-Work Program. "You don't get employees well and then bring them back."

Transitional Employment

The heart of Return-to-Work is "transitional employment." It brings together workers' compensation and managed care in a way which helps injured employees access appropriate treatment while continuing to make a contribution to their team.

"People think they are doing employees a favor when they send them home to heal, but they're not," says Stephens. "What has gone along with this is a failure to keep track of employees—calling them, letting them know they are missed and valued."

Return-to-Work is a really simple process that has the added benefit of helping agencies take control of their workers' compensation costs while respecting the value and dignity of its employees. "We've tried to create a model that's efficient for everyone," says Stephens, who has over 25 years of experience in workers' compensation. In putting together the Return-to-Work Program, she and other members of the DOAS workers' compensation team conferred closely with Milt Wright & Associates, a California consulting firm specializing in organizational design, training, and development.

Report Injuries Quickly

Return-to-Work stresses the importance of reporting injuries as soon as possible after they occur. With the current system, cumbersome paperwork may discourage supervisors from reporting injuries right after they happen. Return-to-Work solves this problem by providing supervisors with a toll-free 800 number to use in reporting employee injuries. The employee is also given an 800 number to call for a physician referral.

The supervisor is asked questions about the physical, mental, and environmental demands of the employee's regular job, and this information is given to the treating physician before the first contact with the injured employee. With

this information, the treating physician is more likely to send the employee back to work, perhaps with modifications, at a much earlier time. For most cases, this "work as treatment" will significantly improve the recovery process.

Transitional Employment Team

Return-to-Work depends on a Transitional Employment Team to decide what duties the employee can safely perform with the guidance of the physician and to adjust the employee's work in creative ways. The team develops a transitional employment plan to guide the employee gradually toward a full work release as the injury heals. Its members may include the employee, the treating physician, a medical case manager, the supervisor, and a member of the DOAS workers' compensation team.

Since the membership of the transitional team is flexible, other people may be added whenever they are needed, such as physical or occupational therapists, agency managers, safety experts, or human resource personnel. The team meets on a regular basis to adjust the plan as the employee's recovery progresses.

A team approach to transitional employment keeps one person from feeling overwhelmed with the responsibility of helping several injured employees. It also means more resources are available to speed the employee's recovery.

In those cases where the treating physician sends the employee home to recover, Return-to-Work ensures the employee does not feel abandoned or forgotten. The fear of litigation sometimes leads supervisors and others to limit their contact with injured workers.

This often causes resentment on the part of employees, who feel they have made a sacrifice for their employer. Experts say it's resentment that spurs litigation, and they emphasize the importance of ongoing communication in reducing the potential for an adversarial relationship.

Maintaining Employer Contact

Good employer contact with an injured employee can make the difference between an employee's returning to work or being permanently and totally disabled, according to members of the DOAS workers' compensation team. It can make the difference between an employee having permanent work restrictions and an employee enjoy-

ing a full work release. Team members stress the important role that the supervisor plays in maintaining regular contact with an injured worker and in providing encouragement and information during the recovery process.

Reasonable Accommodation

A few employees will never fully recover from an injury. In these cases, Return-to-Work brings in a rehabilitation specialist from the medical care organization (WC/MCO) to work with the Transitional Employment Team to modify the employee's job in ways which preserve its essential functions. This process, known as reasonable accommodation, looks for ways to change a job or to redesign a work station so the employee can continue performing the job's most important duties.

Reasonable accommodation, required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), is an integral part of Return-to-Work. "Besides cost savings," says Stephens, "an additional advantage to the program is that it will help insure compliance with ADA standards."

Transferable Skills

If reasonable accommodation fails to preserve the job's essential functions, the next step calls for determining if the employee has transferable skills which allow placement in another position. The rehabilitation specialist helps make this determination and assesses whether these transferable skills can be developed with limited training. There are cases in which employees are certified as permanently disabled, but they are the exception after all options are exhausted.

"Disability becomes a last resort instead of a first option," Stephens says. "We react to a doctor's opinion of a physical impairment and create a disability. Impairment is a medical decision, and disability is our human reaction to it."

Disability Claims Increase

Disability claims, which are the benefits paid to employees for lost wages, have been driving workers' compensation costs in recent years. These claims increased about 32 percent for both 1994 and 1995, while the cost of medical care provided to injured workers increased only about 2.5 percent. In essence, these statistics tell us that we have been lengthening employees' periods of disability.

The cost of direct claims for FY 1996 totaled \$42,212,933. Of this

amount, \$18,922,114 was paid to injured workers for lost time and permanent disability benefits.

Although many people think that workers' compensation weekly benefits are substantial, the truth is just the opposite. "You can't support a family on a workers' compensation claim," Stephens warns.

Stephens has made presentations about Return-to-Work at meetings and conferences throughout the state. "The people who deal with workers' compensation claims daily are thrilled to see a structured process to reduce disability," she says.

Spring Rollout

The workers' compensation team is ready to begin the rollout of the Return-to-Work Program, which promises a significant savings in workers' compensation costs while improving services and maintaining jobs for employees. Implementation will occur in regional rollouts beginning this spring. Training will be conducted for medical providers, administrators, and supervisors as well as all employees. The training includes an award-winning video produced jointly by DOAS and Milt Wright & Associates specifically for Georgia.

Customer Service Teams

At the same time the Return-to-Work Program begins, workers' compensation adjusters will initiate a new approach toward customer service. This approach again stresses the benefits of teamwork. Teams of adjusters will work with specific state agencies, and as a result, each agency will know exactly which team to call for help with workers' compensation claims. This means each team will have a thorough knowledge of their agency's experience with claims. It will offer greater service continuity to agencies and also help adjusters identify possible trends in employee injuries at particular job sites. Employee teams at the job site can use this information to develop new safety programs or to modify existing processes.

Preserving Earning Potential

The Return-to-Work Program promises enormous benefits for employees as well as state agencies. It helps preserve an injured employee's job and earning potential, assures immediate access to needed medical care, and constrains financial losses from workers' compensation and disability claims. "With the Return-to-Work Program, everybody wins," Stephens said.

The Atlanta Hawks salute
Georgia's State Employees
with two great games!

Monday, March 17, Orlando Magic
Saturday, April 5, New York Knicks

Special Discount Prices
(no Ticketmaster charges)

\$27 seat for **\$22.25 Lower Level**
\$23 seat for **\$18.25 Upper Level**

ORDER NOW to allow time for tickets to be mailed. Mail your ticket order to: State Personnel Council, P.O. Box 347206, Atlanta, GA 30334. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return of tickets. Make checks payable to State Personnel Council. No walk-in ticket sales. Tickets subject to availability. Games start at 7:30 p.m.

Department: _____
Your name: _____
Day Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Monday, March 17, Hawks vs. Orlando Magic
No. of tix _____ x Price \$ _____ = Subtotal \$ _____

Saturday, April 5, Hawks vs. New York Knicks
No. of tix _____ x Price \$ _____ = Subtotal \$ _____

Total number of tix = _____ Total price = \$ _____

Walk-In Testing Speeds Up Job Process For Agencies, Applicants

You don't need an appointment to take a test for certain high-volume jobs in the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS), the Department of Corrections, the State Board of Pardons and Paroles or the Department of Children and Youth Services.

In a move designed to cut down on the time it takes to give state agencies a roster of potential job candidates, the State Merit System (SMS) now offers regularly scheduled walk-in testing for these jobs and makes test scores available to the hiring agency generally within two working days.

The testing process for both DFCS and criminal justice has been designed so that the job applicant takes a single test, but can request that it be scored for each of the individual jobs covered by the test. (Questions are weighted differently for each job or may have a different minimum passing score.)

DFCS Walk-In Test Schedule

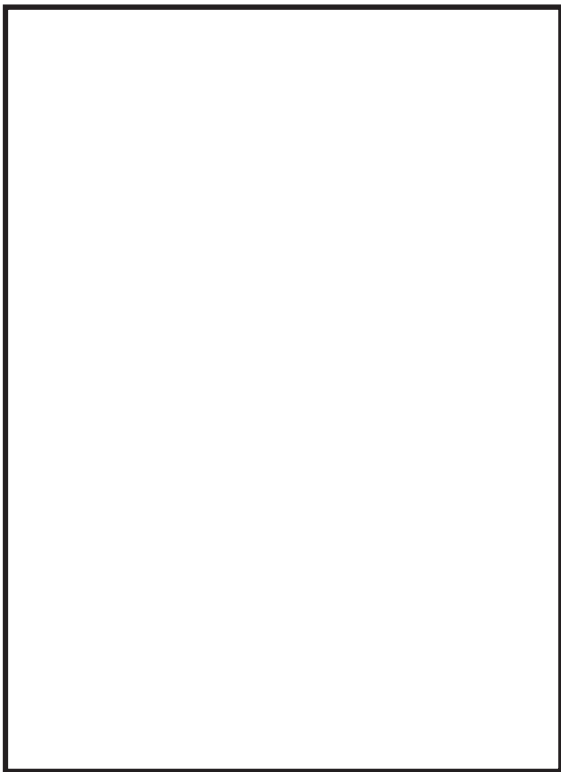
DFCS jobs covered by walk-in testing include: Employability Services Case Manager, Family Independence Case Manager and DFCS Services Generalist (former Senior Caseworker jobs), and Child Support Enforcement Agent. Tests are given in Atlanta (Floyd Building West Tower, Room 404) on the first and third Tuesday (excluding state holidays) at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.

Criminal Justice Test Schedule

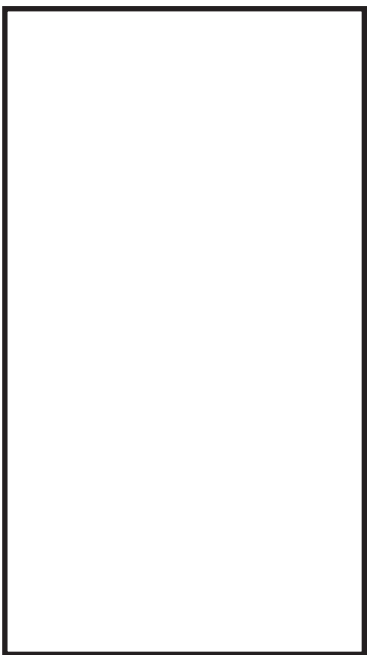
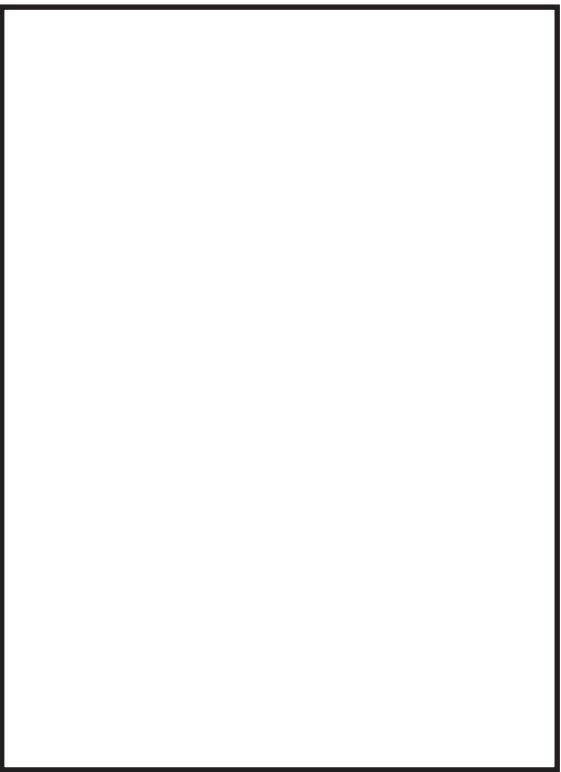
The criminal justice test is given the first and third Thursday (excluding state holidays) in Atlanta (Floyd Building West Tower, Room 404) at 8:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Candidates can test for Probation Officer I & II (one job), Parole Officer, and Juvenile Probation/Parole Specialist II (formerly Court Service Worker).

Simplified Application Form

A simplified application form has



Consultant Laurie Stroupe (left photo) answers a question from a walk-in testing applicant; (right photo) Kourtney Suttles, who works at Metro State Prison, takes advantage of walk-in testing option.



Asst. Div. Director Doris Maye

been developed specifically for walk-in candidates that does not require a prior job history—the hiring agency has the option to request that information directly from the applicant. Applicants should bring a current photo identification card and also may bring appropriate documentation for Veteran's Preference points.

For updated walk-in testing information, as well as other job information, call the Applicant Services Information Line at 404/656-2724 (Option 1, 8). Expanded job announcements also are posted for agencies and available to applicants on the SMS web page at <http://www.state.ga.us/SMS/>.

"Walk-in testing is one way we can help agencies identify qualified candidates as quickly as possible, and it streamlines the testing

process for applicants as well," Doris Maye, Assistant Director of the Applicant Services Division, said. "The response has been tremendous—we've tested over 700 walk-ins for the DFCS jobs since we started this process last October, and over 300 for the criminal justice series since we started that test at the end of January."

"Other jobs will be considered for addition to the walk-in testing program over the next several months," Maye said. In addition, the Merit System will work in partnership with DFCS to offer walk-in testing on a statewide basis.

DFCS: A Video-Based Test

The DFCS test was developed by an outside vendor and validated by the Merit System for use in Georgia. Over 400 current employees actually took the video-based test, and panels of supervisors weighted each item on the test.

"We've been using video tests for years," SMS consultant Laurie Stroupe said. "The video shows a vignette, pauses, and shows four possible responses. It is a multiple choice test of realistic, on-the-job situations. While no specific prior experience is required, the test identifies applicants who have skills important to top performance."

Applicants must be on time because the video format makes it impossible to seat late arrivals. "We highly recommend that people coming to take a test use MARTA since parking around the Capitol is in short supply," Stroupe advised.

Case Studies For Test

The criminal justice test was developed by an SMS team headed by Stroupe under the direction of Section Manager Richard Gonter. Stroupe and team members Max Wainer, Charles Brooks and Mike Moye created the profiles for the hypothetical case studies used in the test.

"This is an integrated test—there's no math section or reading section, for example, but the applicant is presented with two different case files. The applicant needs to read and understand the overall files and then answer specific questions. The test is a close fit to actual jobs—it requires reading, thinking, problem-solving and time-management competencies," Stroupe explained.

As with the video test, the criminal justice test was validated by having over 500 current employees take the test and provide feedback.

The Applicant Services Division also is expanding its traditional role to include a broader range of assessment services. "Testing is really just the first step in the selection process," Maye said.

Competency-Based Interview

"For example, there's no way for a multiple-choice test to measure a competency such as leadership. So we will be working with state offices such as DFCS to develop competency-based interview models that give them a tool to measure a broader range of competencies.

"In this case, we might suggest

that, as part of the interview, they ask applicants to give an example of a time when they helped a team to stay on track or to get back on track to achieve its goal. This question gives applicants a chance to demonstrate that they actually have leadership competencies."

Banding

Another project now in the works is to develop a banding approach to evaluate applications for Social Services Case Manager.

"A problem with the traditional training and experience evaluation methods was that the individual points awarded for specific training or experience would make sense, but when they were added up, the scores didn't always satisfy the needs of agencies, especially for this entry level job," Stroupe explained. "Banding is more of an end-product process, where applicants are placed in broad bands—very highly qualified, highly qualified, qualified. Based on agency feedback, we believe this approach will create a product that is more useful to agencies."

Customer Service Is Thread

Customer service is the common thread that links these various projects.

"The Applicant Services Division now offers a much more customized approach to customer service," Maye said. "Whether it's to develop an agency-specific test, coordinate a special recruitment project—or just to field a quick phone call asking us to give priority attention to a critical vacancy—we're here to help," Maye said. Agencies with questions can contact Maye, Stroupe, or Gonter at 404/656-5820.

**Important Telephone Numbers:
SMS Applicant Services Division**

- Applicant Info Line:** 404/656-2724
- Application Evaluation:** Kristy Nix, 404/656-2720
- Rating Guides & Minimum Qualifications:** Cyril Brown, 404/656-5820
- Recruitment:** Doug Cogburn, 404/656-2725
- Veterans Preference Points:** Angeleta Spears, 404/656-2728
- Written Exams:** Richard Gonter, 404/656-5820